

Tewksbury Public Schools

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Celebrating Excellence



January 20, 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It has been a challenging two days for the Tewksbury Public Schools. Yesterday we, along with a dozen or so Massachusetts school districts, received a robo-style telephone bomb threat that resulted in a two hour lock-down of Tewksbury Memorial High School. Local and State Police were contacted and conducted a threat assessment. Following consultation with the Northeast Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (NEMLEC) and State Police, the Tewksbury Police Department identified the specific threat as low level. As a result, we did not evacuate the building, instead opting to conduct a visual search/inspection of the building by police, fire, and District Security Team personnel. As an added precaution, we brought in a State Police Canine Officer who conducted a limited search of the facility.

This morning, all seven Tewksbury Public Schools' principals received a rambling email threatening violence at the "high school." It's important to note, Tewksbury Memorial High School was not specifically identified. Again, the Tewksbury Police Department was immediately contacted, police were dispatched to all schools, and the District Security Team personnel, along with school staff, conducted a search of each school.

Our actions on both days were conducted with the guidance provided by the State Fire Marshall's Massachusetts Bomb Threat Guide which states:

"Shelter-in-Place/Evacuation Decision Tree – It is important not to reward threatening behavior, so unless a threat assessment warrants evacuation, consider search, shelter-in-place, or limited evacuation alternatives first."

In both incidents, our local public safety personnel deemed the threats were low level and our coordinated response was appropriate. An email received yesterday from our regional Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) noted schools receiving threats of this nature should "conduct the search themselves..."

The safety and the security of our students is our top priority. Although no bomb was found, nor any threats to our child were uncovered, we take each threat seriously. We are grateful for the support of the Tewksbury Police Department, the Tewksbury Fire Department, NEMLEC, our District Security Team, and thank them for their efforts and support extended to us over the past thirty-six (36) hours.

Sincerely,

John E. O'Connor

John E. O'Connor, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

TPS Mission Statement:

To educate and challenge all learners in the Tewksbury Public School Community while supporting their development as well prepared and productive members of a diverse global society.